

## Influenza Activity Continues at Peak Levels

Influenza activity in Los Angeles County (LAC) remains widespread and at elevated levels. During week 5, ending February 4, more than 1 in 5 laboratory tests were positive for influenza among those with influenza-like illness (ILI) presenting at our sentinel clinic sites (Table 1). This elevated level of activity decreased slightly following a peak during the first week of January, and then slightly increased during week 5 (Figure 2). Similarly, the proportion of visits to emergency departments attributable to influenza-like illness also remains elevated, and following a decline after week 1, increased during week 5 (Figure 1).

Throughout this season, a significantly greater proportion of type A has been identified both locally and nationwide, and among the strains tested, [H3N2 predominates](#). Seasons with high levels of influenza A H3N2 tend to be more severe than A H1N1 or B seasons and are more likely to affect older adults. As of week 5, a total of 27 confirmed influenza deaths have been reported in LAC. This is more than twice as many deaths as was identified at this time last year. In addition, severe illness is occurring more among older individuals. To date the average age of influenza-related deaths in LAC is 78.9 years with a range of 43 to 102 years. There have been no pediatric deaths, and 74% of all deaths were among persons greater than 65 years old. Last year, the average age of all confirmed influenza deaths was 61.4 years with a range of 1 to 103 years. LAC DPH has developed [guidelines](#) and [materials](#) to assist with the management and prevention of influenza among older adults in skilled nursing facilities. Because antiviral treatment is most effective when provided within the first 48 hours of illness, people at [high risk](#) should see their physician as soon as possible when experiencing influenza-like [symptoms](#). Treatment should not be delayed while waiting for laboratory confirmation of influenza.

**Table 1. Los Angeles County Influenza Surveillance Summary**

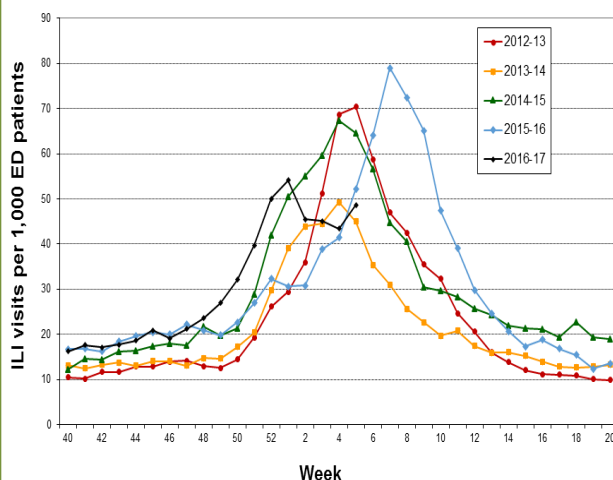
	2016-2017		2015-2016	
	Week 5*	YTD†	Week 5	YTD
Positive Flu Tests/Total Tests (Percent Positive Flu Tests)	497/2,462 (20.2%)	4,061/36,853 (11.0%)	380/2,172 (17.5%)	1,566/26,813 (5.8%)
Percent Flu A/B	97/3	97/3	55/45	59/41
Pediatric Flu Deaths‡	0	0	0	0
Adult Flu Deaths	1	38	1	11

\*For the 2016-2017 season, week 5 extends from 1/29/2017 to 2/04/2017.

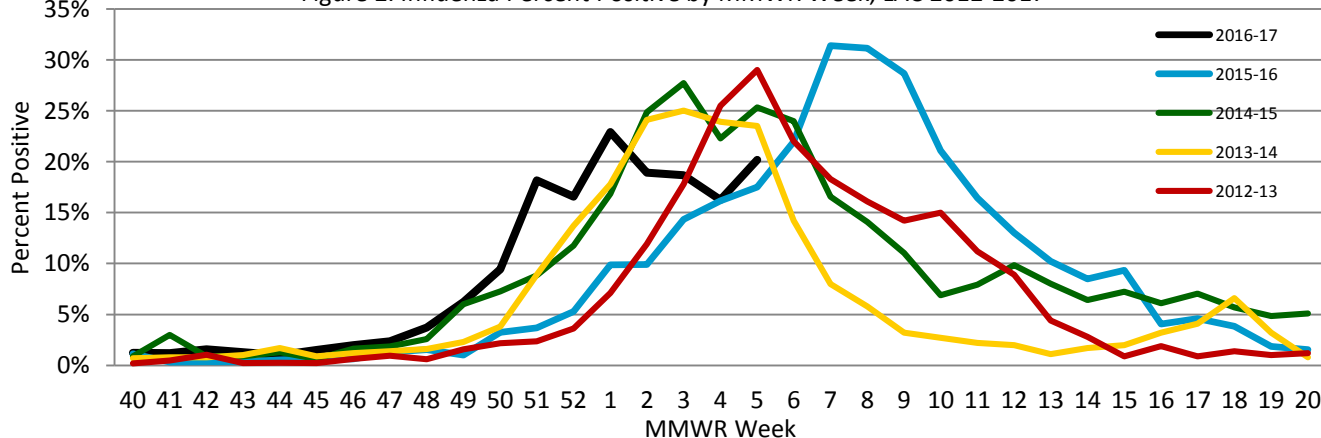
†The influenza surveillance year started August 28, 2016.

‡Confirmed influenza death is defined by a positive lab test, ILI symptoms, and clear progression from illness to death. Data is provisional and subject to change.

**Figure 1. ILI proportion of ED Visits, Los Angeles County 2012-2017**



**Figure 2. Influenza Percent Positive by MMWR Week, LAC 2012-2017**



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